

The President's Daily Brief

10 June 1969
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I. MAJOR PROBLEMS

SOVIET AFFAIRS

Although most attention has focused on his spectacular diatribes against the Chinese, Brezhnev also used the occasion of his lengthy keynote address to the Moscow conference to assert explicitly that the Soviet Union seeks an understanding "on measures for limiting and restraining the arms race." Brezhnev also said that the USSR intended to maintain its armed forces "at the highest level," but admitted that this retarded scientific and technical progress and restricted Moscow's ability to meet the needs of the Soviet people. This appears to have been an effort to square the Soviet Union's "anti-imperialist" posture with its advocacy of arms talks with Washington.

Brezhnev's attention in the context of the Communist conference to the need for negotiated settlements in general and to arms talks in particular underlines their importance to the Soviets. It also indicates a determination not to exacerbate relations with the US despite Moscow's tactic of using the anti-imperialism theme to minimize disunity in the Communist camp.

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Soviet military activity in the Far East, which we noted in Saturday's Daily Brief, is still at a high level. We still think this activity is related to a major combined forces exercise. An exercise of this nature, in addition to

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being useful to the Soviets as a timely bit of muscle-flexing, could be intended to test contingency plans against China.

VIETNAM

Communist attacks fell off to a moderate level yesterday after three days of stepped-up activity.

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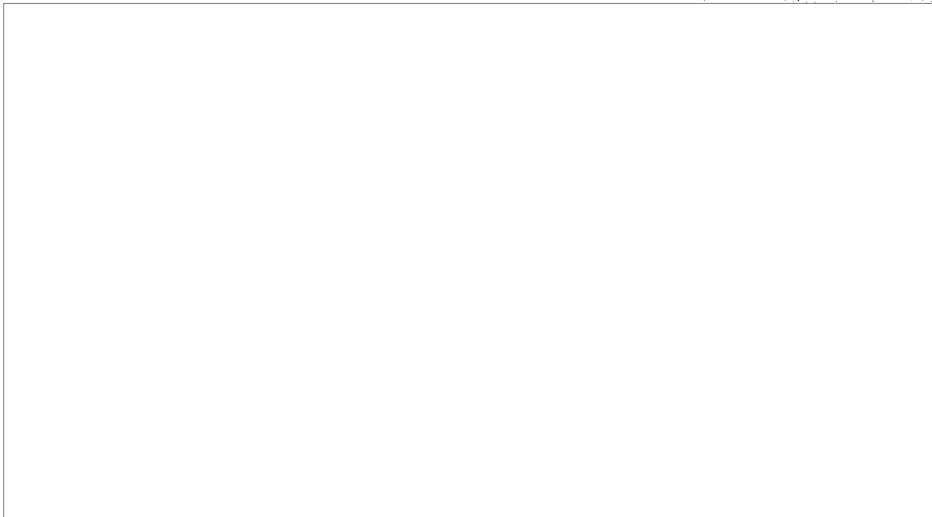
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Hanoi's first response to the Midway communiqué was filled with invective but lacked substantive content. A North Vietnamese spokesman in Paris may have given the essence of Hanoi's real assessment of the Midway meeting: he described the troop pullout as designed to "appease" the American sentiment against the war. The initial South Vietnamese reaction to the results of the Midway meeting was generally one of calm acceptance. Several prominent National Assembly members approved the announcement of the troop withdrawal.

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There is nothing significant to report on Europe.

II. OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS

KOREA

Sunday's abortive North Korean infiltration attempt on South Korea's east coast points up two things. First, Seoul has considerably improved its security measures since last fall, when 120 agents successfully landed in the same general area. Second, Pyongyang is still committed to such efforts designed to undermine stability in the South and to give credibility to its claims of a growing revolutionary movement there.

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